

Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper

Submission Cover Sheet

Submission Information

This cover sheet should be attached to submissions made to the Department of Communications in relation to the Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper.

Contact Details

Name of respondent:	Robert Rayner
Name of organisation:	Balranald Shire Council
Phone:	
Email:	
Website (if applicable):	
Date:	28 Feb 2014

Confidentiality and privacy

All submissions and comments, or parts thereof, will be treated as non-confidential information unless specifically requested, and acceptable reasons should accompany each request. Email disclaimers will not be considered sufficient confidentiality requests.

Respondents lodging a submission should be aware that submissions (excluding any information agreed to be treated as confidential information) will be made publicly available, including on the Department of Communications' website. Submissions and comments will be subject to freedom of information provisions. Despite a submission being identified as confidential or sensitive, submissions may be disclosed where authorised or required by law, or for the purpose of parliamentary processes.

Do you want all or parts of the submission to be treated as confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, identify below which parts of the submission are to be treated as confidential (and provide a reason):

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If the submission contains personal information of any third party individual, indicate on this Submission Cover Sheet if that third party individual has not consented to the publication of his or her personal information:

Submission Instructions

Submissions are to be made by **5:00pm (AEST) Friday 28 February 2014**.

Where possible, submissions should be lodged electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word or other text-based formats via the email address mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au

Alternatively, submissions can be sent to the postal address below (to arrive by the due date):

The Manager
Mobile Coverage Programme
Department of Communications
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2615

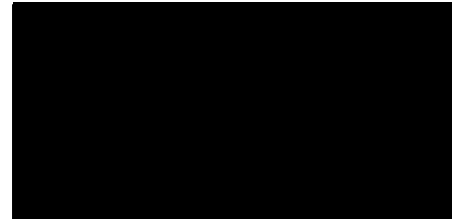
All submissions lodged will be acknowledged by the Department of Communications by email (or by letter if no email is provided). Respondents lodging a submission who do not receive acknowledgement of their submission should contact the Department. Submissions which are not acknowledged by the Department as being received may not be considered. Respondents should be aware that emails greater than 10Mb may not be successfully delivered.



BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
MUST BE ADDRESSED TO
THE GENERAL MANAGER
RR:025

Contact:



28 February 2014

The Manager
Mobile Coverage Programme
Department of Communications
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2615

Re: Mobile Phone Coverage Submission

Balranald Shire is located in the South West of the state and covers an area of 21,346 square kilometres. The north of the shire has little or no mobile phone coverage.

Council have a number of points why it feels it should be considered in the first funding component of the \$80 million mobile network expansion project, and these are detailed below:

1) Clare Public School is within this no coverage area to the far north of Balranald. (Refer map attached.) Wireless devices such as I-pads are increasingly used in schools for educational purposes and the fast pace of technology will see schools like Clare left behind because they do not have full access to mobile wireless technology.

Some statistics and facts are:

- 79% 5-14 year olds accessed the internet in 2009 this is up 65% from 2006
- 85% of children who used the internet at home used it for educational purposes
- In 2009, almost a third (31%) of all children, owned a mobile phone
- With portable devices, users can access the internet whenever or wherever they like. Access and use of information technology by children is likely to continue to become easier and more convenient.
- Ipads, Ipods, Laptops, Smartphones are wireless based technologies
- Mobile wireless internet connections are the fastest growing technology
- Almost half of internet connections are mobile wireless
- There are over 11 million mobile handset internet subscribers in Australia

2) Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area and Mungo National Park have no mobile phone coverage and have over 50,000 visitors a year. <http://www.visitmungo.com.au/world-heritage> . This area is located in the North West of the Shire adjoining the Wentworth Shire Council.

3) Cristal Mining, a sand mining company, are due to commence production in the near future in Balranald Shire approx. 80 kms north of the Balranald township and plan to use the main road north to Ivanhoe to transport their mining product to the rail head at Ivanhoe. This will significantly increase the transport movements on this road.

4) The main road from Ivanhoe to Balranald is part of the proposed "Wool Track" (for further information on the Wool Track please refer to this website <http://www.jlkilby.com.au/projects/the-alternate-inland-highway-feasibility-study>).

Council have received funding of 4 million dollars from the NSW State Government to complete the sealing of the Balranald to Ivanhoe Road. The completion of this project will see an increase in transport movements.

5) There are currently radio phone towers located at the properties "Oakdene" and "Min Min" Stations. These towers could be utilised for further technology to provide mobile coverage in these areas. (Refer map attached).

Technology at these sites and a tower at Mungo National Park and in the Clare School area would vastly improve the current lack of coverage.

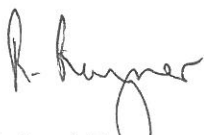
The Australian Government Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee's recommendation 3.2 "a co-investment program, jointly funded by the Commonwealth and interested states or territory governments, to expand the mobile coverage footprint in regional Australia, focusing on priority regions selected with community input. Open-access arrangements for other carriers to tower infrastructure and/or domestic roaming arrangements should be a feature of the program."

- Cristal estimates the NSW Government will receive \$1 million per month in royalties from Cristal mine operations in the Hatfield area alone.

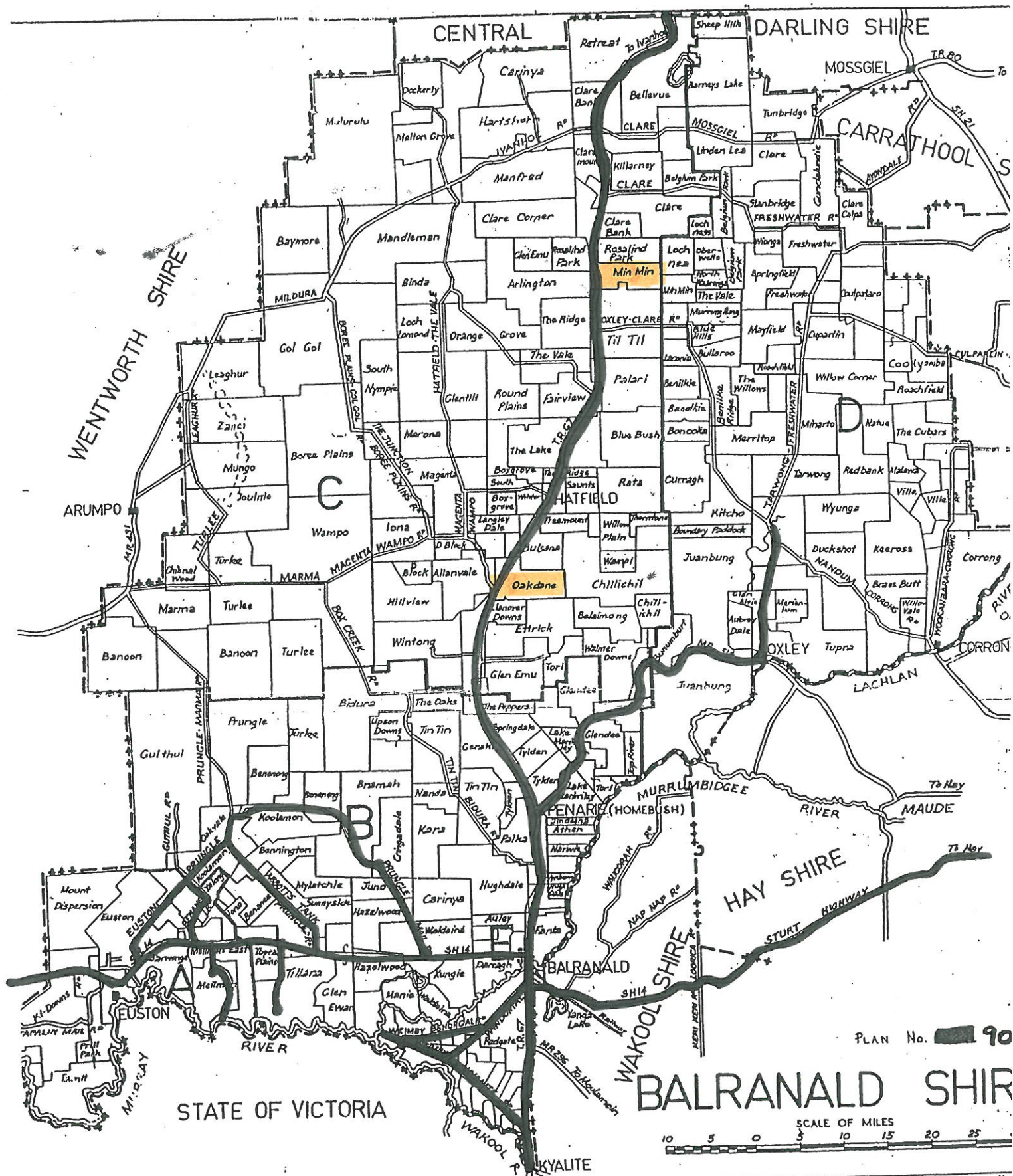
It is beyond the Council and the community to fund mobile phone coverage.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Robert Rayner
ACTING GENERAL MANAGER



B - DOUBLE / ROAD TRAIN ROUTE

